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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/851,946	05/10/2001	Masao Okubo	010609	4049

23850 7590 04/09/2003

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EXAMINER

NGUYEN, JIMMY

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2829

DATE MAILED: 04/09/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.	Applicant(s)
09/851,946	OKUBO ET AL.
Examiner	Art Unit
Jimmy Nguyen	2829

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 January 2003.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Argument

The applicant's argument filed 1/21/03 has been considered with the following effect;

The applicant argues that Libretti's probe card has no elements meeting the limitation of the recited upper guide plate or main substrate in claim 1, since the probes must drop vertically from the main substrate and must pass through the holes in the upper guide plate (page 3 of the remark). The examiner is disagrees. The test card (10) has the pins (12) are provided with stems 12a and 12b which runs along the universal connector (7) to connect with the probes (6); the pins (12) will become the male contact (6) at the bottom guide and break through the test card (10) as a hole (as seen in the figure for the contact pins 12 come out). Therefore, the pins (12) drop vertically from the main substrate (21) and pass through the holes in the upper guide (10).

Further, the applicant argues that the probe card (3) in Libretti is not made of layers laminated separably, since separation would destroy Libretti's device. However, according to figure 10 of Libretti, the probe card (3) is made of many different layers laminated separably, and there is no indication whatsoever in the prior art to mention destruction of the probe card as applicant's argument.

As explained in detail above, the amendments do not render the claims distinct and patentable over prior art; nor do the amendments overcome the rejection. The applicant's arguments have considered in full, but they are deemed to be unpersuasive and without merit. Therefore, this final rejection is made.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Libretti (US 5187431).

As to claim 1, Libretti discloses (fig 1)

A vertical probe card (fig 1) having vertical probes (6) for use in measurement of electric characteristics of the objects (w, not shown) of measurement including A main substrate (21) forming conductive patterns, a plurality of probes (6) drooping vertically from main substrate (21), and a probe support (10, 3, 1, 2) provided at the back side of main substrate (21) for supporting probes (6), wherein probe support (10, 3, 1, 2) is disposed parallel to main substrate (21), and has an upper guide plate (10) and a lower guide plate (3) for supporting the probes (6) by passing the through holes opened in each, and lower guide plate (3) is composed of a plurality of substrates (as seen in the figure 1) laminated separably.

Conclusion

1. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jimmy Nguyen at (703) 306-5858. Any inquiry of a general nature of relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-4900.



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JN.
March 31, 2003